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Rewald mixed facts and fantastic, Wong says

By Walter Wright
Advertiser Staff Writer

Sunlin Wong testified yesterday his contacts with the murky world of espionage ranged from real CIA personnel to a plan for a James Bond-type theme restaurant in Waikiki complete with secret passages and alibi telephones.

Wong, former president of Bishop Baldwin Rewald Dillingham & Wong, was testifying in the federal court fraud trial of his former partner, Ronald Rewald.

Rewald says he took investors' money but never intended fraud. He contends he was financing his "cover" as a wealthy businessman for the CIA, which he says created his firm and promised to reimburse expenses.

But for a man who worked undercover, Rewald had an oddly open fascination with the world of spies, Wong's testimony indicated.

Wong said Rewald wanted to open a restaurant in Waikiki to be named the "Safe House."

It would be modeled after a restaurant in his home town of Milwaukee operated by Rewald's acquaintance, David Baldwin, Wong said.

The Milwaukee restaurant, Wong said, had a "James Bond motif. The front of the building was nondescript," looking like an import-export firm. Patrons entering the front door would arrive in a small room, where there was a telephone.

When they dialed the proper number, Wong said, they would be spotted by a television camera from inside. If they were cleared, a bookshelf in the wall would slide away, revealing a tunnel leading to the bar. Inside, there were secret passageways and alibi telephones — a telephone equipped with eight or nine different sound-effect tapes. If a patron wanted to give the impression he was actually at a bowling alley, he could punch a button and get bowling alley background noise when making a telephone call, Wong said.

"And Rewald liked this very very much?" Assistant U.S. Attorney John Peyton asked. "Yes," Wong said.

But there were other, less frivolous connections with people linked to the CIA, Wong testified.

There was "Rich" Richardson, alias Richard Cavannaugh, whom secretary Sue Wilson said also used the name James T. Bishop — a fictitious director of the firm. Richardson has been identified by Rewald's lawyers as chief of the CIA's West Coast foreign intelligence resources.

Wong testified he met Richardson/Cavannaugh on two occasions, but never discussed CIA or Bishop Baldwin business with him.

There was also Jack Kindschi, a former Honolulu station chief for the CIA, who was a Bishop Baldwin consultant and author of the firm's quarterly reports on economic conditions. Wong said Kindschi didn't have space in company offices, but attended three or four meetings of an advisory "executive committee" set up by Rewald, and also attended a few company-related social functions. Kindschi never mentioned the CIA, Wong said.

There was "John Doe 5," the American consulate employee in Hong Kong whom Rewald said worked for the CIA. Wong said he met John Doe 5 briefly in a hotel room with Rewald, and that Rewald was offering to "do additional work for him" and John Doe 5 indicated he "appreciated the offer" and would consider it if the need arose.

Wong said Rewald went back to the United States shortly thereafter, while Wong stayed on for a few days, meeting some people, basically as a tourist.

Wong had asked Rewald before the Hong Kong trip if there were any danger, and was told there was not, he said.

There was "John Doe 7," the man introduced by Rewald as a CIA employee, who asked Wong who in Bishop Baldwin had a CIA security clearance, and then asked for Wong's help in locating an office for himself in Honolulu.

There was "John Doe 14," apparently a reference to Charles Conner of Sweden, a Bishop Baldwin consultant and old friend of Kindschi from the days Kindschi worked undercover for the CIA in Sweden. Conner, like other

consultants, sent Bishop Baldwin investment proposals that were never accepted, Wong said.

There was Rewald's claim that the CIA was using the Bishop Baldwin name in San Francisco.

There was Rewald's request, carried out by Wong and Calvin Gunderson, for a list of real estate owned by an individual. The report, which cost \$187, was delivered by Wong to Jack Rardin, Kindschi's successor as CIA station chief in Honolulu.

It was true, Wong said, that Bishop Baldwin consultant Jerry Signori, an accountant, once told him there were a "lot of classified things" he couldn't discuss in the company. But Wong said he didn't know who had classified them, and didn't assume Signori meant the CIA.

Both sides completed their examination of Wong yesterday, allowing him to return to the federal correctional facility at Lompoc, where he is serving a two-year sentence after pleading guilty to mail and securities fraud in the case.